

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Status

Claims 1 through 31 have been cancelled by the present amendment and claims 32 through 59 have been added. Independent claims 32, 48, 53, and 59 with claims 33-47, and 49-52 and 53-58 depending respectively therefrom will remain for further consideration.

More Clearly Defined

The claims in this application have been revised to voluntarily further clarify Applicant's unique invention. Applicant maintains that the claims as filed were patentable over the art of record. However, to expedite issuance of this application, reconsideration of the claims in light of the amendments and for the following reasons is respectfully requested.

Claim History

The Examiner rejected claims 32-35, 40-44 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Iwata. The Examiner rejected claims 36-39 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Iwata in view of Sridhar et al. The Examiner rejected claims 45 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Iwata in view of Liu. The Examiner rejected claims 48, 53, 57-58 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Iwata. The Examiner rejected claims 49, 54, 59 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Iwata in view of Hauris et al. The Examiner rejected claims 50-51 and 51-56 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Iwata in view of Sridhar et al. The Examiner rejected claims 52 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Iwata in view of Sridhar et al. and in further view of Hauris et al.

Independent claims 32, 48, 52 and 59 remain for consideration. As discussed previously, claim 32 recites a method of aggregating physical links by determining line status, associating a plurality of links to create a first aggregated link and broadcasting the information about the aggregated link including the available bandwidth of the highest available capacity physical line of the aggregated link. Claim 32 now specifically recites that the nodes are adjacent each other and than the “broadcasting” of “aggregate status information” is done to “said plurality of nodes.”

Claim Rejections

The cited reference to Iwata shows an ATM network having aggregated links. However, as best understood by the specification and drawings, Iwata shows the available (“vacant”) capacity of an individual link (i.e., the potential capacity, or “maximum transmission capacity” minus the current traffic) is stored in table, namely the “individual neighbor link state information registering table (see col. 6, lines 42-51), but the information on any particular link is not broadcast outside of the local database. Figures 5 and 6 of the Iwata patent show the “abstracted link management table” 65 which uses pointers to direct traffic to the desired channel, apparently based on internal calculations. Nowhere in the reference does it disclose that this information is distributed to other nodes. Sending information on the individual links and the abstracted link would certainly increase instead of decreasing the amount of information sent over the network, which would be contrary to the teaching of the Iwata invention. Contrary to this assertion of the Examiner, Iwata says in column 4, lines 40-42 that “two physical links 15 and 16 provided between first and second ATM switches 11 and 12 in FIG. 1 are abstracted and replaced with one abstracted link 31.” (emphasis added) And further “only this abstracted link state information is notified by flooding to all of the switches.” (Col. 4, lines 59-60)(emphasis

added) It is highly unlikely, and certainly not taught anywhere in the Iwata, that Iwata would broadcast both the abstracted information and the individual link information to all of the other nodes, as that would teach away from and destroy the central concept of Iwata. However, once information is received at a particular node, the table may be used to further direct traffic according to information in the table, which is separate from broadcasting the information. Further there is no information provided within Iwata that anything other than the "abstracted" or total capacity of the abstracted link is provided in the broadcast, "A link abstracting portion 67 aggregates physical link and the logical link connected to the common adjacent switch into one abstracted link." (Col. 5, lines 47-51) It is therefore submitted that only the information on the link *as a whole* is broadcast, and not information on individual links or an individual link's capacity as recited in the claim. The aggregate capacity of the aggregated link is the only information transferred to other ports, not the maximum available capacity on an individual physical line. The present invention broadcasts the maximum capacity of an individual line (though the identity of the line is not necessarily specified, only that the abstracted link has "a" line with such capacity") in the aggregated link as recited in claim 32. This is nowhere found in the reference. For at least these reasons, claim 32 should be allowed. The Applicant respectfully points out that the Examiner has not indicated a single place where Iwata says that the "abstract link management table" is "broadcast." Additionally, table 65 does not have information on the "available bandwidth" of the individual lines as that information is on a separate table "individual neighbor link state information registering table." Figure 6 does not show this particular information anywhere within the table. At best Figure 6 shows a pointer to a table having such information. But again, Iwata says that "only" abstracted link state information is broadcast, and it would be contrary to the teaching of Iwata to broadcast

information about every abstracted link and every abstracted line as this would increase, rather than decrease the amount of information distributed (“flooded”) around the network. For at least these reasons, claims 32-35 and 40-44 should be allowed over the art of record.

The remaining references fail to provide this missing element. Therefore the remaining claims should be allowable over the art of record.

Summary

Applicants have made a diligent and bona fide effort to answer each and every ground for rejection or objection to the specification including the claims and to place the application in condition for final disposition. Reconsideration and further examination is respectfully requested, and for the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition to be passed to issue and such action is earnestly solicited. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Robert N. Blackmon, Applicants' Attorney at 703-684-5633 to satisfactorily conclude the prosecution of this application.

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Respectfully submitted,



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